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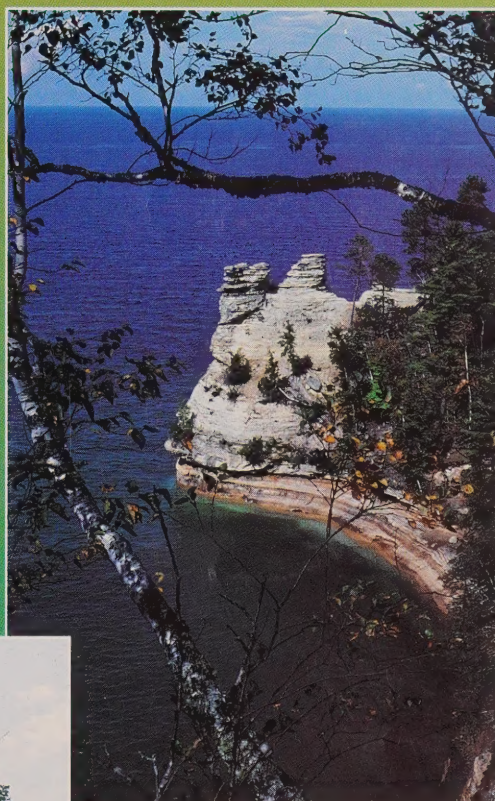
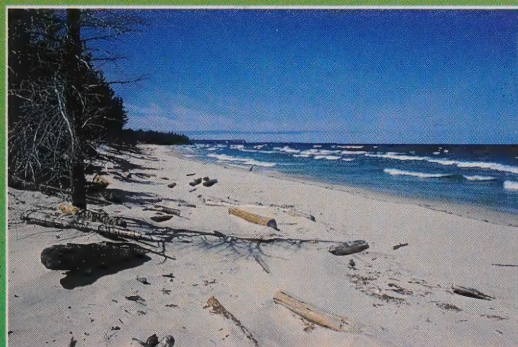
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THE GREAT LAKE SUPERIOR CLEANUP

SUMMER 1995
FINAL REPORT



LAKE SUPERIOR BINATIONAL



PROGRAM

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Lake Superior, with its 4385 kilometres of shoreline, is singular in its rugged beauty and untamed quality. It is this unique, relatively pristine character, that attracts outdoor enthusiasts of all types to the wild waters of this largest great lake.

Individuals who have walked on some of the remote stretches of coast will marvel at the isolation and rough magnificence of the lake. These same individuals, upon close examination, have also marvelled at the litter which clutters the shoreline. Fortunately, this material is thinly spread so that the aesthetic impairment of the shore is relatively small.

This litter problem, although thinly spread, has sparked concern amongst individuals interested in preserving Lake Superior. Specifically, in late 1994, a Lake Superior canoeist suggested that municipal shoreline cleanups be expanded to include the more remote stretches of coast. This was the spark that ignited the Great Lake Superior Cleanup.

The Great Lake Superior Cleanup was developed as a project under the Lake Superior Binational Program to Restore and Protect the Lake Superior Basin. The initiative was nurtured and administered from the Lake Superior Programs Office in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

The goals of the Great Lake Superior Cleanup were:

- to remove litter from the shoreline of the lake and its islands; and
- to raise awareness about the pristine and fragile Lake Superior ecosystem.

The success of the Great Lake Superior Cleanup was dependant upon the efforts of volunteers from around the lake. Efforts such as this, when coupled with an increased awareness of the impact that littering can have, may eliminate the need for future shoreline cleanups.

Action Plan

The Great Lake Superior Cleanup began in earnest in June 1995. It was identified that the coordination of a shoreline cleanup by one person was impossible, so three coordinators were recruited and the lake was divided into three areas: Thunder Bay, Ontario to Munising, Michigan; Munising to Superior, Wisconsin; and Superior to Thunder Bay.

Initially, the coordinators established a list of potential volunteers. Hundreds of telephone calls were made to individuals in communities around the lake. In addition to this, background information and posters were mailed to media representatives throughout the basin.

The response to the telephone calls and press release was promising, but it was felt that a more direct approach would help in recruiting volunteers. Consequently, it was decided that all three coordinators would travel to their respective regions on a "lake-wide tour." The objective of this effort was to establish personal contacts in each of the communities around the lake. This was supported by the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, and the U.S. National Parks Service, who supplied representatives to travel with each of the coordinators.

People were contacted in hundreds of locations around the lake including municipal offices, marinas, park offices, First Nation Reserves, Coast Guard stations, industries, universities, and a variety of service group offices. They were asked to volunteer their time as cleanup team captains and to recruit other cleanup volunteers. Posters and Team Captain's Handbooks were distributed to all potential cleanup leaders. Cleanup captains were asked to call the Lake Superior Programs Office using the toll free number once they had completed their local cleanup.

Cleanup Highlights

The response to the "lake-wide tours" was overwhelming. Everyone contacted was very supportive of the cleanup. In some instances communities had already conducted their shoreline cleanups as part of their annual community cleanups. In other cases, communities committed to doing a cleanup during the summer of 1995. By August 31, the majority of Lake Superior communities had conducted a shoreline cleanup. This resulted in an approximate total of 1758 bags of litter and 90 tonnes of refuse such as tires, bed frames, and shopping carts being collected by 2414 volunteers from an estimated 41 communities and parks along the lake shore. These numbers do not include many large cleanups, which will be occurring in September 1995, in places like Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Duluth, Minnesota, and the Keweenaw Peninsula, Michigan.

The following highlights have been chosen as examples of the interest Lake Superior citizens have in protecting and restoring the greatest of the great lakes.

Apostle Islands National Lakeshore

The Apostle Islands National Lake Shore in Northern Wisconsin was the focus of multiple cleanups during the summer. The park staff organized a cleanup of Long Island Beach involving 22 volunteers, and several power boats. Smaller zodiacs ferried people to various locations around the island and returned them to a larger vessel at the end of the day. They picked up 12 bags of garbage, six tires and a boat seat over a period of five hours. During the cleanup some debris was spotted in the shallows along the shore. A volunteer waded out to retrieve it, and on the way, found a dollar bill submerged in the shallow water. Upon returning to the park headquarters the volunteer deposited the dollar bill in the donation box. After the cleanup, the participants were treated to a tour of the La Pointe Light House on Long Island from which they spotted an active Bald Eagle's nest .

During the 8th annual Inland Sea Symposium held in Red Cliff, June 15-18, eleven guided paddle tours were conducted with destinations to various parts of the Apostle Islands. The paddle tours consisted of anywhere from 2-26 participants and three guides. Each tour was issued a regular size garbage bag and were asked to pick up litter along their route and at their destination site. A total of 146 volunteers, paddled 137 kilometres in four days, collecting a total of six bags of garbage.

Cook County

One of the most interesting projects undertaken on the Minnesota Lake Superior shoreline during the year of the Great Lake Superior Cleanup was an infra-red photography scan. Through the local water management plan, Cook County participated in a multi-county infra-red scan of the Lake Superior shoreline from the Knife River to the Canadian border. Cook County also conducted a scan of Caribou and Devil Track Lake, two densely populated lakes in the Lake Superior watershed. The purpose of the study was to educate shoreline property owners by visually demonstrating their effect on the watershed.

The shorelines were photographed with 35 mm slide film from an altitude of 170 metres. The slides were then numerically correlated on a map which would be analyzed for possible erosion, nutrient, toxic, or septic run off, aquatic vegetation and abandoned or excessive trash materials. The information also established a database for residents to review and compare future lake uses and impacts.

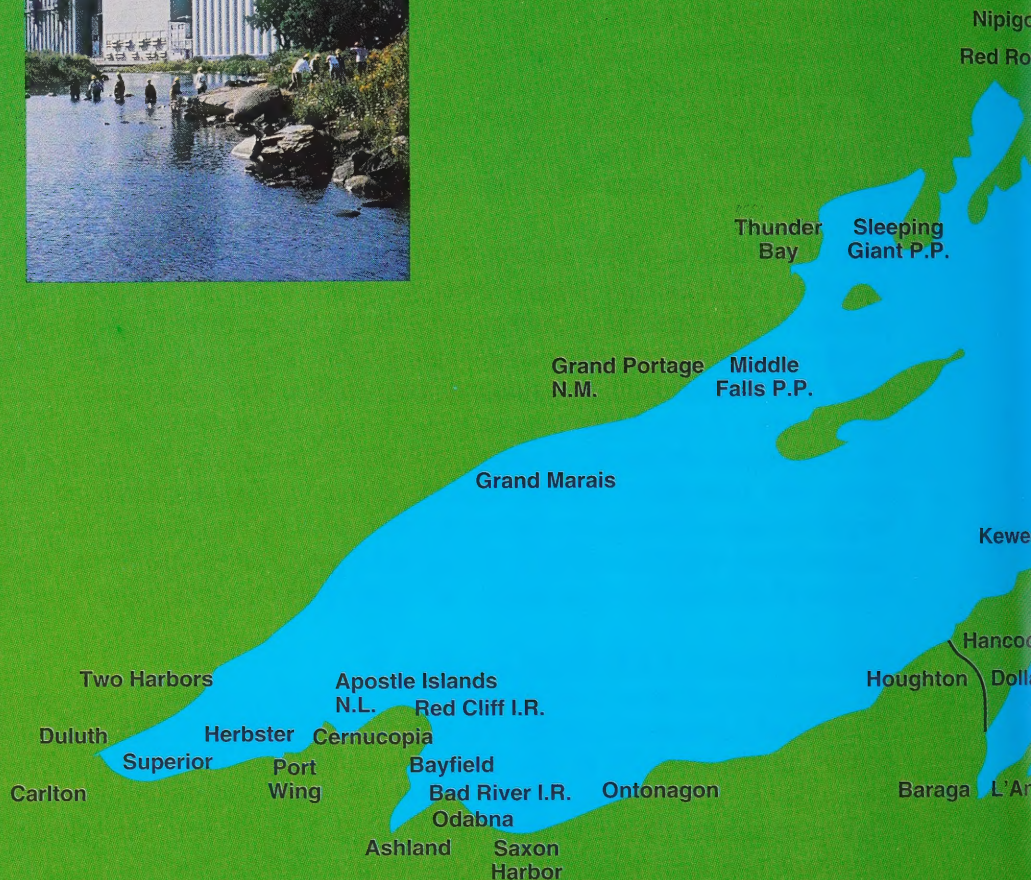
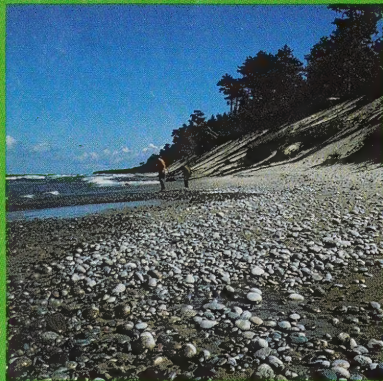
In two other related cleanup efforts, Cook County collected 300 junked appliances and 100 tonnes of scrap metal. Many lake association members participated in organizing shoreline cleanups for the spring event. Several hundred litres of hazardous waste, including paints, pesticides, poisons, aerosols, batteries, and a range of solvents, were collected from 200 households.

Tahquamenon Falls State Park

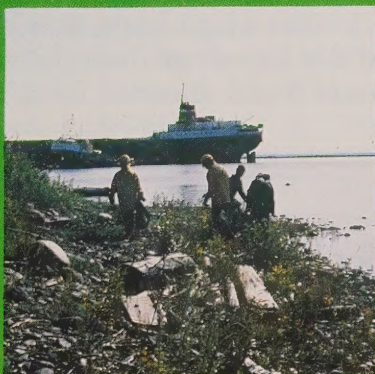
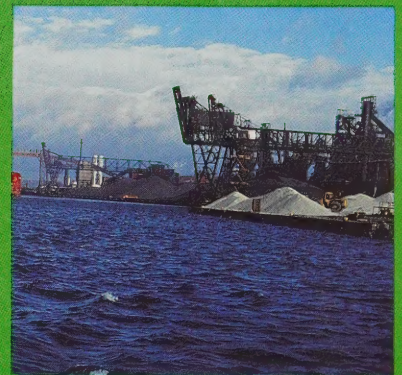
The sandy beaches on the Michigan shoreline of Whitefish Bay contrast markedly with the rocky cliffs of the Ontario shoreline. On August 17, a cleanup of Michigan's beautiful Whitefish Bay beaches was performed, from the mouth of the Tahquamenon River to the tip of Whitefish Point. The cleanup effort happened as a result of the initiative of Tahquamenon Falls State Park staff.

Seventeen residents from a number of shoreline communities participated in the cleanup, and managed to pick up ten large garbage bags of trash, three tires and an empty 55 gallon drum. The weather was excellent for this year's beach cleanup and, the participants have indicated that this may become an annual effort.

Map to Show a Selection of Comm The Great Lake



Communities and Parks Participating in Superior Cleanup



Marathon

On June 10, 1995, Marathon, Ontario kicked off its "Great Lake Superior and Marathon Cleanup." The cleanup was organized by the Marathon Community Development Commission and the North of Superior Recycling Association. The main goals of the cleanup were to remove litter from Marathon, Heron Bay, and accessible portions of the shoreline; to raise awareness about the pristine and fragile ecosystem of Lake Superior; and to increase pride in the communities through this cooperative effort.

Sixty residents representing nine groups and organizations as well as individuals picked up an estimated two tonnes of garbage. In addition, James River-Marathon Ltd. removed industrial scrap from their shoreline. More than 12 kilometres of shoreline were cleaned including several high priority areas in and around Marathon and Heron Bay. Afterwards, a barbecue in appreciation of all the volunteers was held at the Lions Penn Lake Park. Everyone seemed to be interested in making the "Great Lake Superior and Marathon Cleanup" an annual event.

Silver-Grandview Campers Association

The Silver-Grandview Campers Association, located east of Thunder Bay, Ontario, operates a summer program for children 5 to 12 years in age. The 30 children in the program undertook to do a shoreline cleanup with the assistance of their leaders and several parent volunteers. More than a mile of shoreline at Grandview Beach, Silver Beach, Silver Harbour and the Silver Harbour Conservation Area were cleaned. Over 40 shopping bags of debris were collected as well as four tires and several nail filled boards. All of the garbage was taken to the Shuniah landfill site. Also, the children reported seeing an amount of unidentifiable underwater debris at the boat launch at Silver Harbour Conservation Area. The Campers Association hopes to examine and remove this debris next summer.

To encourage participation in cleaning up the shoreline, the Association organized a draw for a hooded sweatshirt and other small prizes, such as a movie rental from the local store. North Shore of Lake Superior Remedial Action Plan posters were given to each of the participants. The Silver-Grandview Campers Association reports that not only did they cleanup their shoreline area, they also increased awareness amongst members about the need to preserve the shoreline and the lake.

Wake Up To Your Waterfront

On June 9-10, 1995, the third annual Wake Up to Your Waterfront shoreline cleanup was held in Thunder Bay. Approximately 90 tonnes of garbage was collected, by almost 1000 volunteers, from 125 km of the Thunder Bay shoreline. Trash and scrap metal were separated, with over five cubic metres of metal diverted for recycling.

Planning for Wake Up to Your Waterfront was started in April with the hiring of a Cleanup Coordinator by the Lake Superior Programs Office. Posters were then distributed around the city and a call for volunteers was sent out via the newspaper, radio, and television.

Fifty-three Team Captains were recruited to lead cleanups at ten specific sites. A Team Captains' meeting was held before the cleanup to provide information and to hand out Cleanup Kits. The kits consisted of garbage bags, gloves, flagging tape and a Team Captain's Handbook. Additional, volunteer, coordinators were recruited for the actual cleanup days. They were responsible for setting up tents at drop-in sites, establishing garbage drop off points, collecting the garbage at the end of the cleanup and transferring garbage to eight centrally located industrial garbage bins.

Several volunteers received prizes donated by local businesses and everyone was treated to free refreshments. In addition to this, a special award was offered to the industrial sector to encourage their participation in Wake Up to Your Waterfront. Some industrial cleanups were conducted during company family picnics, and others were conducted by staff assigned to the task over a period of days or weeks. Although several companies conducted major cleanups, Valley Camp Inc. won the award for their outstanding effort to clean up their waterfront. Their cleanup involved nine of their 25 employees working a total of 204 hours to remove debris from 3.2 kilometres of shoreline. The debris included timbers, barrels, ties, ladders, plywood docks, and uprooted trees.

Wisconsin Point

An extensive cleanup took place at Wisconsin Point in Superior, Wisconsin. The cleanup effort began on July 13 when nine Junior High summer students combed a one kilometre section of beach. They managed to fill six bags of trash. This earlier effort was followed up by the "Beach Blast", organized by the City of Superior Playground Program, on August 9. Eighty children between the ages of 5 and 12, plus an additional twenty adults, were mobilized. They cleaned up a 4.5 kilometre section of beach where they filled 12 bags with trash weighing approximately 484 kilograms. The Playground Program provided return bus transportation from city playgrounds to the beach. Refreshments were provided and prizes were awarded to the cleanup participants.

The Great Soo Shoreline Cleanup

The Sault Ste. Marie area has undertaken to perform a shoreline cleanup of both the Canadian and American shorelines. This cleanup effort has been called "The Great Soo Shoreline Cleanup" and will involve both American and Canadian volunteers. This effort will cover the shores of Whitefish Bay (on Lake Superior), both sides of the St. Mary's River through the Twin Saults and along the lower reaches of the St. Marys River to Lake Huron.

The Great Soo Shoreline Cleanup started its planning and recruitment in late July and will finish in mid September with an end of summer blitz campaign on September 15 and 16. Friday September 15 has been designated for challenge cleanups between industries, businesses, governmental agencies and schools. Saturday September 16 will be primarily for public participation. A volunteer wrap up celebration will be held on Saturday September 16 with local businesses donating prizes for volunteers that have handed in their volunteer registration prior to the cleanup.

Conclusion

The goals of The Great Lake Superior Cleanup were to remove litter from the shoreline of the lake and its islands and to raise awareness about the pristine and fragile Lake Superior ecosystem. The Cleanup involved 2414 volunteers who took direct action in trying to improve their environment. The Cleanup has also helped to ensure that citizens around Lake Superior are aware of the importance of keeping Lake Superior clean and the impact that litter can have on the shoreline of this great lake.

Most communities around the lake have participated in helping to cleanup the litter, and in so doing, have witnessed the beneficial results of their collective efforts. This has resulted in many communities expressing a desire to continue to have shoreline cleanups in the future. In addition to this, the Cleanup has helped to increase community spirit and has contributed to the idea that our community is lakewide in scale. The distribution of this report will show the residents of the Lake Superior Basin that their concern for the lake is shared by many others.

This final report documents the hard work, dedication and goodwill of the Cleanup volunteers. The efforts of those who participated will be appreciated by everyone who enjoys Lake Superior.

Cleanup Participants

The following is a list of communities and organizations involved in the Great Lake Superior Cleanup.

Michigan

Hiawatha National Forest
Mather Middle School, Kids For Environmental Causes
Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore (Munising)
Tahquamenon Falls State Park
Town of Grand Marais
Town of Paradise
Town of Whitefish Point
Groundwater Education Michigan
Hancock
Houghton
Keweenaw Bay Reserve
Marquette
McLain State Park
Michigan Technical University, Houghton
Ontonagon

Minnesota

Carlton
Cook County
Beach Sweep, Duluth
Grand Marais
Grand Portage National Monument
Superior
Two Harbours

Ontario

Amethyst Harbour Campers Association
Clover Beach Limited
Domtar Packaging, Red Rock
Friends of Lake Superior Provincial Park
Friends of Pukaskwa
Gitchee Gumee Marina (Goulais River)
Great Lake Superior and Marathon Cleanup (Marathon)
Ishkibibble Beach Limited
Middle Falls Provincial Park
Montreal River Harbour
Neys Provincial Park
Nipigon & Area Tourist Information Centre
Nipigon/ Red Rock District High School
Pass Lake
Pukaskwa National Park

Ontario (continued)

Silver-Grandview Campers Association
Sleeping Giant Provincial Park
Sunnyside Beach Campers Association
The Great Soo Shoreline Cleanup (Sault Ste. Marie)
Thunder Bay Yacht Club
Town of Nipigon
Town of Terrace Bay

Wake Up To Your Waterfront (Thunder Bay RAP PAC)

Wisconsin

Apostle Island National Lake Shore
Ashland
Bayfield
Bad River Reserve
Cornucopia
Dollar Bay
Glendale Boy Scout Troop #393
Herbster
Inland Sea Society
Port Wing Marina
Sigurd Olsen Environmental Institute, Ashland
Red Cliff Reserve
Saxon Harbor Boat Club
Wisconsin State Natural Areas, Brule

